

Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/657,408	JONES, JIM
	Examiner James M Hewitt	Art Unit 3679 [Initials]

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTO-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to _____.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 16-18 renumbered as 1-3 respectively.
3. The drawings filed on 2/20/04 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All
 - b) Some*
 - c) None
 of the:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
6. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date 9/8/03
4. Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
7. Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. Other _____.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Charles Gunter on 4/14/04.

The application has been amended as follows:

Claims 1-15 have been canceled.

In claim 16 line 3, the phrase –the bell end defining an end face at the opening,-- has been inserted after “joint.”.

In claim 16 line 6, the phrase –, wherein an end of the gasket body lies substantially at the end face at the opening-- has been inserted after the second instance of “region”.

In claim 18 line 4, the phrase –, the bell end defining an end face at the opening- - has been inserted after the second instance of “surface”.

In claim 18 line 10, the phrase --, wherein an end of the gasket body lies substantially at the end face at the opening-- has been inserted after “extent”.

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The prior art of record does not disclose, singly or in combination, a self-restrained gasket as claimed in detail in independent claim 16, or a pipe joint as claimed in detail in independent claim 18.

The closest prior art is Peting et al (US 5,037,144). Peting et al fails to teach or fairly suggest that an end of the gasket body lies substantially at the end face of the bell opening of the female pipe. Peting's gasket body (36), with ring or ring segments (38) therein, is disposed interior of the end face of the bell end opening. Clamp sections (31), although connected to gasket body (36), cannot be construed as the claimed gasket body. And, Peting et al provides no specific disclosure that closing the gap between adjacent ring segments (see Figure 7) prevents the teeth from engaging the outer surface of the male pipe prematurely before the gasket has been compressed enough to create a seal, though this may be contended and considered inherent. It should also be noted that Peting's device is used with ductile iron pipe and not plastic pipe.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James M Hewitt whose telephone number is 703-305-0552. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 930am-600pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lynne Browne can be reached on 703-308-1159. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

J M L
James M. Hewitt
Patent Examiner
Technology Center 3600

Eric K. Nicholson
ERIC K. NICHOLSON
PRIMARY EXAMINER